

2012-2013 Weekly Field Reports

Copacabana, King George Island

Volume 18
February 11, 2013

Science Report:

1. Penguins: Adélie penguin fledglings have almost completely disappeared from the colonies and beaches at Copa. An occasional fledger and a few molting adults have been seen at Point Thomas and Copa.

Gentoo penguin 85-day weights were completed on Thursday (2/14). 105 chicks were banded and weighed; the average fell within 100 grams of the 15-year mean. Another 69 gentoo penguin chicks were banded with the remaining bands for a total of 250 banded chicks. Included in this total were the gentoo penguin chicks of known-age parents that had already been banded.

The final chinstrap penguin diet sampling occurred on Monday (2/11). Five adults with chicks were selected from the Uchatka colonies. Analysis of the samples showed that 16% of the krill (*Euphausia superba*) were in the juvenile size range (35 mm or less in length), 48% were adult males, and 36% were adult females. Males ranged in size from 36-50 mm and females ranged from 36-51 mm.

Two chinstrap penguins from the Uchatka colony that are fitted with satellite tags (PTTs) remain at large. Two gentoo penguins with PTTs on Copa Beach will be recovered this coming week.

Chicks from breeding chinstrap penguins on Copa Beach have crèched and been seen mingling occasionally with groups of gentoo penguin chicks.

2. Skuas: This week saw the number of active brown skua nests at Copa fall to four, as the Castle Rocks territory lost its only chick. The remaining four nests account for six chicks. Four of the remaining six chicks had their 48-day weights and measurements this week.

Point Thomas skua routes were completed on Saturday (2/16) and Sunday (2/17). The territory 29 skuas were also visited on Wednesday (2/13) for the 48-day weights and measurements of their two chicks.

Back Country skua routes were completed on Saturday (2/16). Many returning pairs and new individuals were seen on territories. This trip was the final resight survey and feces collection for the Back Country.

The Demay and Patelnia skua routes were not completed this week.



2012-2013 Weekly Field Reports

Copacabana, King George Island

Volume 18
February 11, 2013

3. Whales & Seals: Only one Minke whale was observed this week feeding in Ezcurra Inlet on Saturday (2/16).

The Point Thomas/Copa seal census was conducted on Sunday (2/17). Totals equaled 51 juvenile/unknown elephant seals and eight fur seals.

The Demay/Patelnia seal census was not conducted this week.

There were no sightings of leopard seals this week.

4. Other: A lone macaroni penguin was again observed at the Uchatka chinstrap colony this week, on Monday (2/11), and still appeared to be in the beginning stages of molt.

A downy kelp gull chick was observed on Copa Rock again on Thursday (2/14) and Sunday (2/17).

Weekly Weather:

We had another wet and breezy week with light precipitation most days. The winds stayed between 10 and 20 knots, increasing slightly Saturday (2/16) evening.

Camp Activities:

A few of our Polish neighbors assisted with our gentoo penguin chick banding and weighing on Thursday (2/14), and stayed for a barbeque afterwards to celebrate the hut's 28th anniversary.

The 2012-13 Copa Field Team:

Matt Henschen, Co-Field Team Leader

Brette Soucie, Co-Field Team Leader

Caitlyn Bishop

Ana Bertoldi

Wayne Trivelpiece, Co-PI

